

Poetry of To-day

The Poetry Review New Verse Supplement

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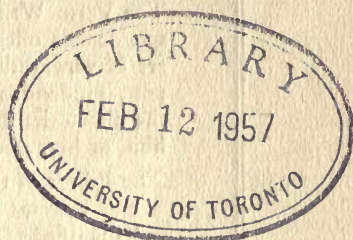
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. Such was the remark growled by TENNYSON in reply to a critic who had quoted the line in question as a perfect example of spontaneity—it seemed to flow so naturally, without effort.

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37, Albion House, New Oxford Street,

L O N D O N ,

W.C.1.



TO A DEAD POET

THE rose hath burned like a scarlet flame,
And the rose hath burned thy heart and mine.
Swiftly the horror of beauty came,
And seared like the fierce Olympian wine
That the gods drink crouching under the vine
Through the spent soul that thirsted long.

Oh the heart of the rose hath a breathless song
In the noon of night 'twixt dusk and dawn,
And the lily blooms have wrought thee wrong
In the hush of a summer-scented morn.
And all things lovely have hands to wound
The soul that in sudden joy hath swooned
'Neath Beauty's suddenly veilles eyes.

The lily's neck is white and tall,
But a yellow heart the lily hath,
And the petals like shrivelled fingers fall,
And rotting stems are the aftermath.
Oh singer thou wouldst not die in the spring.
And wherefore not, for in Spring is death,
The wild rose petals fall in a ring
And withered dance on the west wind's breath,
And after life death followeth.

Eighteen summers and you too lie
In the yawning earth hid deep from the sky.
Deeper than all the flowers you loved
When their foster nurse their murd'ress proved.
Never the sun hath sway in the mould,
All the nights of the earth are rolled
In one dense darkness over thy soul.
Can you not see the moon on the grass,
Nor the grey owl's stealthy shadow pass,
Is earth as dead as thou art dead
Where thou dost lie with mould o'erhead,
Know thou not how the seasons roll ?

In darkness are all the roots of the rose.
Clawlike in darkness grip they the soil.
The obscene roots of the lily close

Down on thy face, and hourly toil
 Sucking thy life through the dank white stems.
 With blood are the crimson blossoms red,
 The orange throats with thy blood are dyed
 Of the lilies that dream o'er the garden bed,
 The vampire lilies dappled and pied
 And girt with a myriad living gems.

Do you not hate the roses now
 Down in the mould where thou art laid,
 Feeling their roots about thy brow,
 Thou who didst love the air of dawn
 When the regal vesture of day new-born
 Splashed the east with a shadow of red.
 Oh singer, the wind doth wail around,
 The river doth swirl in its osiered bed,
 The obdurate rain falls down on the mound,
 Thy muse is flown, and thou art dead.

And yet perchance thou art not lost.
 Although thy song may never wake,
 Who knows what voice soe'er may rise
 To sing the better for thy sake.
 In that thou feedst a flower's heart
 Surely in every air that blows
 Thy voice shall tremble on the wind,
 And in the red mouth of the rose.

ERNEST K. CHALLENGER.

EVENSONG

WHEN curtains the quiet lights shut in,
 And the rain to the dusk gently cries ;
 Lo ! the line of your throat to your chin
 Is the start of a swallow that flies
 Through the sunset. The piano is wed
 To your voice wherein stars hang as tears.
 Like the sweep of the earth through the years
 Is the wondrous curve of your head.
 As you play on the strings of my heart,
 My soul drifts away in a dream
 Of which you and the music are part,
 And all that are actual seem
 Of the things that are seen and unseen,
 Of the sweet things that ever have been.

H. M.

DARK SHEILA

SHEILA, dark Sheila, what is it that you're seeing ?
What is it that you're seeing, that you're seeing in the fire ?
I see a lad that loves me. . . And I see a lad that leaves me. . . .
And a third lad, a Shadow Lad . . . (and he's the lad that grieves me)
And whatever I am seeing
There's no fearing and no fleeing. . . .
But whatever I am seeing, it is not my heart's desire. . .

Sheila, dark Sheila, with whom will you be roaming ?
With whom will you be roaming when the summer day has flown ?
"A lad there is who loved me—but loves me now no longer,
A lad there is, who left me (and Oh ! his love grows stronger !)
But wherever I go roaming
You shall never find me homing
For wherever I go roaming, I must wander all alone. . ."

Sheila, dark Sheila, will you listen to my pleading ?
Will you listen to my pleading, will you recompense my pain ?
For I'm the lad who loved you, the lad who so deceived you.
I left you for another, and Oh ! I fear I grieved you !
But if you'll hear my pleading
As across the moor you're speeding
Oh ! if you'll hear my pleading, I'll return to you again.

Sheila, dark Sheila, will you hearken to my calling ?
Will you hearken to my calling, as I call from far away ?
For I'm the lad that left you (but never could forget you)
And I'm the lad that loved you from the very hour he met you !
And if you'll hear my calling
As the shades of night are falling ;
Oh ! if you'll hear my calling, I'll be yours alone away !

But Sheila, dark Sheila, is out upon the moorland,
She's out upon the moorland where the heather meets the sky !
And the lads shall never find her, for there's One walks by her side
there—
A Stranger Lad, a Shadow Lad, who would not be denied there . . .
She turned her to his calling
As the shades of night were falling,
She turned her to his calling . . . and she answered to his Cry. . .

A. M. CHRISTIE.

THE NIGHT OF PEACE

THE moon is like a burning lamp aloft,
Held by a watcher's hand. The starlight gleams
From out the deeper blue with radiance soft,
Like Angels' torches, lighting up our dreams.
Deep Silence holds. But hark ! what cheers arise
And toward the lonely mountains echoing swell,
From bright-eyed youths, who learn with glad surprise,
They will not need to pass the Gates of Hell.
The soldier slumbering lies till morning light,
No sound of guns to break his hard won rest :
Mother, thy son is safe ! Sleep well to-night,
Wife, with thy husband's portrait on thy breast.
All wearied minds and bodies find release
And holy calm, on this first night of Peace.

November 11th, 1918.

B. M. SKEAT.

LOVE'S LAMENT

SHE came within my life, as some sweet flower,
So fragrant, fresh, and fair.
My parchèd heart was thirsting for a shower :
It fell—and she bloomed there !

She entered my sad heart, like some new song,
Less human than divine.
I thought, " Can this glad tune to me belong,
And may I call it mine ? "

She dawned upon my soul, just like a star,
And seemed to shine for me—
But now, I see it gleaming from afar,
And veiled in mystery.

She flashed within my life, as some bright dream
Of happiness unknown.
A vision—and my soul caught just a gleam—
Alas ! where has it flown ?

For flow'rs will fade ; and stars will sometimes fall ;
And songs will cease, their echoes but remain ;
And dreams will vanish—but at Love's clear call,
They surely live again.

M. SMART.

THE PILGRIM

THE wind is tempered with a buoyant hope,
The southward-looking gorse grows full of gold ;
The sun shines as a harbinger of hope ;
The moon reveals the things by day not told.

E'en now I take my way along the road,
With each new hour the fascination grows,
And from the furrows of the new-turned earth
A great surpassing charm and fragrance flows.

The moon is high before the birds seek rest,
And mingling of the sun and moon to me
Seems as that old approximate of light
Which never shone o'er land or o'er the sea.

A strain of sadness through my joy doth run ;
The mystic yearning of the human soul
For higher, nobler service of the life
That makes and moulds the perfect whole.

Now up the hill a figure strange moves on,
With shivering frame, which tattered garments hide ;
Only a greeting, chill and brief, he gives,
Then passes on, and soon we're sundered wide.

But as I lay me down in restful sleep,
Dreams seem my deeds reality to give ;
And from the little incidents of life
Weave things immortal from things fugitive.

Upon the road again I take my way,
That strange mysterious figure I still meet,
This time he passed not on, but with grave eyes
Came to my side and sought e'en me to greet.

" I come to thee, not, as in other days,
As Death, for I am Life itself, and Love.
Sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor
If thou would'st gain immortal life above."

No word I spoke, my earthly wealth was small ;
 Then Life, whose voice seemed fragrant as a flower,
 Said, "Thou must lay aside the pride of kin
 Of friends, of strength, of intellectual power."

I spoke to him no word, but only smiled.
 I love these things, but by them lay no store.
 "All this I would that thou should'st do," he said,
 "All this I seek of thee, and even more."

"I bid thee in the years that are to be
 Of all men be unloved, unfamed, unknown."
 And at the thought of such great sacrifice
 My soul in silent agony did groan.

Then arm in arm we journeyed down the way
 To where a crucifix its shadow cast.
 "I bid thee crucify thyself," Life said ;
 "As even I were crucified at last."

Then in my stress and agony of soul,
 I wept, and thought of all the world abroad.
 Then turning, knew with whom I chanced to walk,
 And that these things were asked of me by God.

Lt., R.F.C.

G. B.

A HOME SCENE

THE path slopes downward to the meadow's edge,
 Cross-barred with gold, for there the sunshine lies ;
 Where flower and earth scents mingle, and the eyes
 Rest on the fairest picture. In the hedge
 A white gate open stands 'neath leafy arch ;
 There sway the poplar, mountain ash and larch.

The path winds upwards ; rising from the earth
 Come sweet herb odours ; evening's zephyr brings
 The hay barn's fragrance—white moths flit . . . oh wings
 Of high desires ! Far from belovèd hearth,
 Within yon nestling walls, ne'er let me roam—
 Heart of my dearest world !—*for 'tis my home.*

I. E. OSBORNE.

THE TRAMP'S SONG

TO ALL ROLLING STONES, MY BROTHERS AND
SISTERS

HE that hath trodden at dawn in grasses
Suns new-risen have made their pyre,
Walked with wind o'er the mountain passes,
Here I sing him his soul's desire ;
The song of the rolling downs and the hedges,
Of hidden places and craggy edges,
Of Autumn, armed in her brazen masses
With heart of passion, and lips of fire.

Who stays in his own place hath possession
Of flowered gardens and trellised vines,
Riches, comfort, and ripe discretion,
Blood-red glow of his vintage wines,
Lesser loves, and a little learning,
But he hath not seen the watch-fires burning,
Nor of his own soul made confession
Where world-winds whisper among the pines.

The lone bye-lanes, and the ways forgotten
Are wise and old in the ways of men ;
The high-roads reck not of loves begotten,
Of frets and fevers without their ken ;
The small dust-voices sing not of sorrows
(The ageless atoms that have no morrows),
For Death is dead, and corruption rotten,
And Life follows onwards, so, now, as then.

We shall tread the stormy ways with singing,
By midnight courage and mortal pain,
Where grey rocks gleam to the wild surf's springing
We shall come into our own again,
Though we give praise for the peaceful hours,
Fire-side beckonings, glass-grown flowers,
And Sabbath church-bells in safety ringing,
And wind-swayed beauty of golden grain.

We, that have joy in desolate places,
Star-lit evenings by camp and hill,

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Snow-piled summits, and sky-bound spaces,
 Man can work us nor good nor ill :
 For, at the last, when our day-light closes,
 We shall pass as the soul of the roses,
 Nor shall be seen any more our faces,
 Nor shall our feet be heard, that are still.

MARGUERITE FEW.

IN ST. ANN'S GARDENS

WHERE the woody gardens of St. Ann
 To passers-by lie free,
 Among the tallest treetops God
 Has built a rookery.

And there, when from some worldling aim
 I feign would find release
 It is my wont to sit and take
 A pennyworth of Peace. . . .

Oh ! there are birds that sing in spring
 As if from Paradise—
 That with uncaptured melodies
 The hearts of men entice,

But, first ; before their fairest notes,
 Or music written in books,
 Give me the sweetest song I know
 The long low call of rooks . . .

From the windy, barren, tall treetops,
 Many and many a day
 The rooks have prayed for me the pray'rs
 I was too sad to say—

And God, who needs no wealth of words
 The secret soul to scan,
 Has come and sat beside me in
 The Gardens of St. Ann.

BERYL CARTER.

MEMORIES

UPON that sacred night she died
The sun set round and red,
And all heaven's gates seemed open wide
To greet the dear one dead.

The night before we laid her low
A rainbow spanned the sky,
And in the promise of the bow
I put my weeping by.

And, as beside her grave next day
I stood and bowed my head,
A dragon-fly upon its way
Went by with wings outspread.

Sunrise for sunset, after rain
Blue skies and golden things,
And, after all our night of pain,
A pair of rainbow wings.

ARTHUR BENNETT.

ROMANTIC IDEALISM

GORGEOUS palaces reared on high ;
Blue, fluttering pennons ;
The rich traceries of Gothic art ;
Princely robes, and fine enamel work ;
Bright jewels ; colours of sun and moon ;
And the wealth of all the Indies ;
Proud-waving palms and scented groves ;
The languor and the twilight of the East ;
The flash of white arcades by western seas ;
Loveliness of form in painting or in words,
In ivory, marble, tapestry, brocade ;
Wild, glorious visions, Pisgah-sights of El Dorado ;
The lure of art, resistless and intemperate ;
Strange thoughts that make us wonder,
Fade to an afterglow and are no more ;
Spirit voices that acclaim with utmost joy,
And give response in glad ecstasy ;
The dreams that lead men on to farther shores.

W. M. PARKER.

THE LOSS OF THE SON

THIS is the end of the mother in me,
Of all that you satisfied ;
This is the end of happiness,
This is the end of pride,
This is the end of the power to do,
The spur is lost, the zest,
This is the end of the eagle Hope—
That built so high a nest :
This is the end of being wise,
The end of being strong,
This is the wreck of hearth and home,
The silence after song,
This is the loss of the Holy Grail—
To black oblivion hurled,
This is the end of the quest for me,
This is the end of the world !

JULIA WICKHAM GREENWOOD.

THE STREETS ARE FULL OF LITTLE CHILDREN STILL

THE streets are full of little children still,
And maidens—women-grown before their time ;
Where are the lads who sang a merry rhyme
At work, at play, through weather warm or chill,—
So easy was their cup of youth to fill ?
Along the waysides when the church-bells chime
Walk men and women ; but no light feet climb
The hedges or the intervening hill.

There's someone gone from out the world one sees,
Some work unfinished,—willing hands let drop
For sterner tasks beyond home's sheltering trees ;
A hard-fought race to run till all may stop ;
And other hills, not beautiful like these,
Our loved must climb—God help them to the top !

MARY A. POYNTER.

“ THEN AND NOW ”

I KNEW you in the days of long ago.
Then you wore silks and satins with an air
And moved about the world in courtly guise ;

That courtliness yet touches all your ways.
I knew you when your ribboned powdered hair
Made striking contrast to your dark deep eyes :
This now to-day your silvering hair recalls
While yet your dark eyes dreaming watch the world.
Then at a spinet you were used to play
With long lace ruffles falling o'er your hands,
White hands of magic skill that quietly moved
In gleaming light by ancient candles thrown.
The spinet and the ruffles all are gone,
The ancient candles vanished long ago,
But still the magic skill calls to my heart
While still the white hands move about the keys.
O friend of mine, the grace of other days
You bring with you, and mem'ries of the Past
To me, who even then so loved to sit
Beside the spinet, and to watch your hands.
Then I wore patches and a flowered gown
And dainty slippers with the scarlet heels.
They with your silks and ruffles went their way,
But even now as then we two are Friends.

M. C. U.

ENIGMA

THERE is a serpent sleeping round my heart
I fear to waken, lest its venom'd tongue
Should suddenly from its red prison dart,
And stab me with its poison, passion-stung ;
Its lissome curves around my thoughts are twined
Like ivy round a desolated tree,
Its sinuous lengths do but the tighter wind
Around me when I struggle to be free.

And when the darkness falls, I feel its eyes
Probe to the very secrets of my soul,
Like green lamps that with evil have grown wise ;
Its mottled head doth burrow like a mole
In the dark mazes of my heart and brain,
Translating joy to grief, and love to pain.

D. W.

THE HOSTS OF THE HONOURED DEAD

WE'RE the hosts of the dead who have died for the honour
of England,

In the welter of wars that our homeland has valiantly waged ;
And the winds are all ceaselessly wafting our dust ever onwards,
For our bodies as well as our souls are for ever uncaged ;
Thus our guerdon it is to be free now to follow our children
And to see our own triumphs outdone in battles new-staged.

We recruited our ranks in the shambles on the hill-side at Senlac,
When the Norman won kinship with us and a share of this isle ;
And of heroes we claimed not a few from the dead-heaps at Cressy,
Where we mustered our foemen in courage and beat him in guile ;
And on fields as remote from our homes as Quebec is and Plassey
We have bled without stint for our mother in th'hour of her trial.

When Napoleon's fierce eagles were drenching all Europe in
bloodshed,
We defied the fell tyrant and broke him and brought him to bay ;
In the bloody Peninsular days we faced death without flinching,
And at Waterloo, where the world watched us, we flouted the fray ;
And our kinsmen on shipboard who fell for the flag at Trafalgar
Have great Nelson to lead them for ever in battle array.

Where our bones have been picked by the birds in the woodlands and
deserts
We have risen in relays to welcome our conquering sons ;
And on shores where we lay till our corpses were burnt to a cinder
We have thrilled once again to the music of clamouring guns ;
And ever we follow our offspring to battle through lands We
triumphed—
Across oceans, broad rivers, grim mountains our pilgrimage runs.

We have listened once more to the thunder of guns in fair Flanders,
We have viewed the foul vultures of war swooping down on our
streets,
And o'er Turkish sea-walls and thro' African deserts we've followed,
And from China to Chile we've roamed the rough seas with the
fleets ;
But 'mid carnage appalling our children have shamed us in courage,
So our laurels for ever we hand them in token of worthier feats !

FREDERICK L. MITCHELL.

JUNE

O ! June has made her toilet in my garden by the Thames,
Has clothed herself in splendour and has starred her brow with
gems !

The nightingale awoke her, and she bathed, before the dawn,
In the jade and alabaster of the dewy, moon-pearled lawn ;
The flagons of laburnum she has tilted on her head,
And where the gold dye spilled about, bright buttercups are spread ;
She has shaken out her powder-puff, the white, white guelder rose,
And from the flecks it scattered, scent of syringa blows ;
She has tinged her cheek with carmine from the hawthorn's red
racemes,

Her parted lips were painted when she kissed the poppies' dreams ;
She has smoothed her polished fingers with flake of eglantine,
And bound her hair with amber from the honeysuckle's vine ;
The lake's shield was her mirror—but, to see her happy eyes,
She stooped above the pansies—still, wonder in them lies ;
The morning breeze was sleeping in her fan of bracken fronds,
Her white breasts cooled the lilies, cradled, swooning, in the ponds ;
Her cloak was wrought of tissue of the warm night's purple-blue,
That the lambent gleam of moonlight pierced with silver through
and through ;

And when she flung it from her, its web broke 'neath her tread,
And in the wings of iris floated out, a flame, instead ;
And the cloud of jewelled butterflies that caught it on her breast
Took flight—and in wistaria, they trembled into rest ;
But where the broidered hem lay, thick-sewn with pearl and gold,
A thousand thousand daisies their sequin-stars unfold !

O ! June has made her toilet in my garden by the Thames,
Has clothed herself in splendour and has clasped her brow with
gems !

DESÈMEA WILSON.

A MIDLAND TOWN

HE moves along the shadowed street,
Toward the forges' glow,
The houses dark, like rising waves,
Are crested with white snow.

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Beyond the clamour of the steel,
 He treads an ancient way,
 And sings as only men may sing,
 Who honour Yesterday :

The hills are blue, the purple cliffs
 Stand dreaming by the sea,
 My body feels the rush of waves,
 Their colours flow o'er me.

The captives of my sense they pass,
 Unto the soul in song,
 The motions from unfathomed deeps
 About me press and throng.

I know, wherever I may move,
 These dreaming cliffs will stand,
 Shadow and laughter overhead,
 And at their feet the sand.

Lo, when I tread a city street,
 There sings the distant sea,
 Borne on its living waves I draw
 Their colour unto me.

Oh, gray and lonely are the streets,
 Down which the night winds sweep,
 Within the dreamer's heart waves break,
 Deep answers unto deep.

M. P.

THE BLACKSMITHS

HE is dead ;
 Yet I cannot weep :
 The blacksmiths twain, Sorrow and Anguish,
 Have forged bolts and bars of adamant
 And closed for aye the floodgates of my tears.

He is dead ;
 Yet my heart cannot break :
 The blacksmiths twain, Sorrow and Anguish,
 Have beaten out unyielding steel bands
 And welded them around its ache and throb.

R. D. W.

FLEET STREET

O! THEY sought their dream there, and now their footfalls
teem there,

Hustling, laughing, sighing, the poets two by two
Go down the road we go, sir, with hope and dread we know, sir,
—'way for Master Shakespeare and all the laurelled crew!

There they crowd at noontide, and some would just as soon ride
Down the streets in coaches with lackeys purple clad,
Where they trudged they fare now, on feet as light as air now
—Never did a wind run like Chatterton the lad!

“Come into my booth, sir, if poet you in truth, sir!”
O! they fumble sadly, those fingers chapped and red,
And smooth their precious scroll out, and wait the niggard dole out
—“Silver for a song, sir, to live when you are dead!”

Keats' slight hectic wraith goes, with hale and florid Marlowe's
Milton pacing lonely with light-forsaken eyes,
Gay Herrick half in Heaven, to lose the loathed Devon,
Crabbe morose, and Blake counting angels in the skies!

. . . When the streets are still, sir, behold them if you will, sir,
Pacing until cockcrow adown the silent pave,
The latch of stars left undone and Heav'n forsook for London,
Hungry for the town, sir, that starved them to their grave!

MAY O'ROURKE.

SHAKESPEARE PLAYING THE GHOST

WHEN the great Ghost whom all as Shakespeare knew
Walked mid Eliza's courtiers, gallant, grim,
In their Dutch-Italy beside Thames brim
And all their lives into his own thought drew,
No divine bourgeois there with instincts true
Of anxious futures,—James or Samuel trim
Stood and with blinking eyes short-sighted him:
Vainly we search the massive records through.
So unrecorded with what skill we guess
Before his Sonnets' Lord, his dark mistress,
The mighty Creature in the Players' robe
His solemn part performed with motion deft:
With no discoverable cry or gesture left
The hollow O and rumour of the globe.

Cadet, Artists' Rifles.

F. W. HACQUOIL.

THANKS TO THE ENEMY

THOU, who with grief hast filled our land,
Hast wrought more things than thou hadst planned.

Midst other bounties, thou hast brought
Food for many a golden thought,

Bidding our sun-dazed eyes to mark
The unsubdued, primeval dark,

So that our sin-stained cities share
The innocence of the fresher air

In country lanes—the blissful thrill
That's blown in darkness down the hill ;

The elusive mystery which creeps
Round every tree and house that sleeps

Illumined by no mesh of light
To stain the awful robe of night. . . .

. . . When lamps send forth no gleam of cheer
The kindly stars must draw more near.

We thank thee, therefore, once again
For stars that shine no more in vain.

Yet thou, who wheelest to and fro,
Still planning and desiring woe,

Mocking the unavenging air,
Deeming thyself sole monarch there ;

Deceive thyself no more, poor fool !
Learn wisdom in a humbler school.

We scorn the onrush of thy wings,
Most impotent of formed things !

Mid splendours which the dark has brought
Death has no terror for our thought,

And thou, poor, feeble son of Mars,
Art but a speck among the stars !

VICTORIA COATS.

UNDER THE CYPRESSES

THE Spring in Italy, with the wild ginesta growing,
And on the Alban Hills the blossom blushing red,
Across the dim Campagna, the silent shadows lying,
And you lie silent too—silent among the dead.
The delicate west wind rustles along the violets,
The grace of blue anemones begins upon the hill,
Down by the long dim lake the cyclamens are showing,
Only your throbbing heart is for ever—ever still.
Where the olive's grey creeps up to meet the mountain,
Comes a flute of sound between a heartbreak and a song,
Was it God who gave to the nightingales their voices—
Yet laid you in the shadow, so deep—so grey—so long ?
Under the cypresses, like sentinels watching ever,
The sad rain of Italy above you makes its moan,
The ilexes are sighing, the slender spires are dreaming—
There is no Spring in Italy for me—left alone.

F. BONE.

SANCTUARY

I KNELT, and Silence with enshrouding wings
Drew me yet closer to God's mystic Heart,
Pulsing in all things ; and the strident world
Grew dim and distant with her clam'rous voice
Hushed in the soundlessness of voiceless peace.
Far off, a gleaming altar, points of light
Stabbing the tender gloom, a rich-robed priest
Off'ring God's Broken Body once again
With prayer impassioned for a wandering world,
Weary and stained with blood, and full of grief.
Then music leapt forth on the quiv'ring air,
Soaring exultantly past arch and dome
On silver pinions, floating into space,
Bearing the echo of a pain-wrung world
Into the halls of light beyond the Dawn.
And as I knelt I knew the air was charged
With mystic Presences I could not see
Because of earth-born blindness, and because
I lacked the faith that is as flaming fire.
Yet here, it seemed that God and man must meet
In the still Sacrament of Wine and Bread,
In voiceless calm, and on the wings of Prayer
Soaring triumphantly to heights unknown,

Meeting perchance the down-bent thought of God
 On path of light, in union mystical.
 I raised my eyes, and lo, all tremulous,
 A winter sunbeam wrought of palest gold
 Flashed through the Eastern window, and it seemed
 A light miraculous, whereon might dawn
 The Vision Splendid to the pure in heart,
 As ages past it came to Galahad.
 But I—I could not see the Holy Grail.

DORIS S. GOODWIN.

ELIJAH ON HOREB

DOWN in the darkling distance melts the dim brown haze of
 the plain.

Clatt'ring and crashing the boulders boom in the roar of the rain ;
 And Elijah the Lord's last prophet waits for his Master again.

Above him the sky is riven,
 The mountain trembles below ;
 Unmoved on the footstool of heaven
 He watches the fury grow.
 Gaunt and grim 'gainst the storm clouds,
 Like an eagle guarding his nest,
 At the cave's mouth stands the prophet
 Viewing the great unrest.

Away o'er the distant mountains the thunders rumble and die,
 The last faint flicker of lightning fades in the sullen sky ;
 And lo ! in the sound of the silence the Lord is passing by.

In wonder the prophet bows him
 In the depths of his deep despair,
 And the groan of a troubled spirit
 Is borne on the silent air.
 But lo ! on his dumb devotion
 The grace of his God is poured,
 And despair that had once o'erwhelmed him
 Is drowned in the strength of the Lord.

F. C. NISBET.

ON MYSTERY

PREMIUM AWARDS AND CRITICISM

THERE has ever been a charm about the mysterious, but in former days this charm was tempered by a superstitious fear which nullified the efforts which were made to pierce the haze of the unknown. It has been left to our generation to reach out hands into the darkness, groping, it is true, but for the most part fearless and trusting, and there are not wanting signs that faith is gaining knowledge which fear could not understand.

Of course—to change the simile—we have been so long content merely to swim on the surface of life's sea that it is little wonder if our first dives beneath the water are short and spasmodic and that the old hereditary fear sometimes makes us keep our eyes shut, but we are becoming braver, and in time we will dare to dive under with open eyes ready to see clearly the wonders, of which those on the surface cannot dream.

Naturally, in order to keep sane and healthy man was meant to live most of his life on the surface, but just as divers have discovered hidden currents which have the greatest influence on the navigation above, so by piercing the unexplored depths of the sea of life we may find spiritual currents the power of which has been hitherto unguessed. But we must remember that it is psychologically true that we never get more than we expect of spiritual truth, and also that dominant desire tends to achieve its end.

That it is the poet-mind which has this desire to get below the surface is abundantly clear to all who have eyes to see, and it is an interesting fact that this month all the prize winners show that they at least are aware of the undercurrents and long to know more of the spiritual forces.

The Premium Poem is entitled *A Mystery*, and to its writer, D. S. Bryan, the prize of one guinea is awarded. In language and metre of rare charm and beauty he puts the question: What is a dream? No definite answer is given, but three are suggested, and we are left with a mystic picture of the spirit, stealing out, unseen, to meet in the night the waiting spirit of the loved one.

Second, but of such excellence that to the writer of it is also assigned a guinea, is *The Water Lilies*, by Vivienne Dayrell Browning (aged 14). Here the mystic sense centres round the flowers. What are they? Boats freighted with prayers, holy grails of the night,

or flower souls? The imagery of the poem has the true artist's touch.

The third guinea is divided between four writers. Margaret B. Weston sends *Love's Mystery*, a poem in which we feel the glow and passion and power of love, but in which we are told that its mystery can only be solved after death. In *Vision*, Una Malleson tells how and where the secrets of nature can be found by the child heart. *Nuit Blanche*, by M. E. Morris, is a fragment of an alluring dream picture, and, in *The Night*, L. M. Stewart treats of the weird, unearthly powers of the darkness.

The following poems are worthy of special mention :

The Lost Kingdom, by O. A. Joergens.

Doubt, by Desemea Wilson.

Whence Comes Beauty? by F. Baxter.

Beyond the West, by J. Stephen Blandford.

Restoration, by Gilbert Rae.

CRITICISMS

Monk : There is a great improvement noticeable in your verses. *The Lark* is the better of the two poems, but "report" does not rhyme with "naught." The really beautiful lines in *The Robin*,

"and drifts along

Until thou cage it in thy wistful song,"

show that you are realising the charm of simplicity of language.

Desmond : *Twilight* is good, but "quavers to the starlit dome" is too artificial—also you should be repentant !

Hawthorne : Both the poems which you have submitted are very slight. *Recompense* is mere repetition. *Main de Dieu* is better, but you must enlarge your vocabulary.

Valetta : *Prisoners* is a most prosaic effort and can scarcely be called "a parody" of Milton's sonnet. The metre of the eighth line is faulty. *Leonore* is quite unconvincing and the feeling is superficial.

Cuchulinn : The metre of *Mountain Sorrow* is very clumsy and quite detracts attention from the pathetic thought of the verses. *The Mountains of Gloom* has some merit, but the idea is not well worked out and several lines are atrocious—e.g.,

"Earth, air, water and rocks, they all seemed dead."

Both poems are very inferior to those submitted before.

Coomnagehy : *The Good Influence* is a simple but pleasing little poem, which holds promise of better things. *A Fragment* is too bombastic and sometimes approaches the ludicrous, as :—

“And mighty stones, and dead men’s bones
Are knocked about in frenzied rout.”

Flow : Your *Sonnet to Emily Brontë* is quite a charming little poem, but it is not a sonnet ! You should study the metre required for that form of verse. *The Dell* is not quite so pleasing, but you are very happy in some of your expressions—e.g. :—

“She sought for God in Autumn leaves,”

and

“A little wind threads all the trees.”

Eileen Sinclair : The metre of both your poems is quite correct. Your thoughts are at present somewhat superficial and unfinished, but it should be quite possible to better your present standard. You have a poetical fancy and your language is sometimes good, but the ending of each of your poems is weak.

Espanola : There is a certain merit in your verses, but they are monotonous. There is little point in *The Dark Men of the Hills*. *The Secret Shrine* is better, but the frequent repetition of “who” and “whose” is irritating.

Diffident : The language and style of your poems is much improved. “The thing I loved” in *Remorse* might be altered with advantage. *The Leprechaun’s Song* is a dainty little effort, but, perhaps because of the difficulty of the metre, is sometimes too abrupt.

I. Averill : *The Bridge of Dreams* is a pretty child-poem. It is more difficult to estimate the merit of verses in dialect, but *The Fire* is certainly successful in touching the reader’s heart if it reaches no very lofty poetical height.

Puck : Both *The Dreamer* and *In a Garden* are poetical in parts, but they are uneven. Avoid such phrases as “Foxgloves and hollyhocks play each their part.” Your work holds promise of something better.

Lance Jack : The rules apply for all poems submitted for criticism. *Memories* is a pathetic poem of real feeling, but the repetition hardly adds to the effect. The last line of the second stanza is the weakest. *A Day-Dream* is pretty, but the last two lines are unconvincing.

Veritate : Considering the difficulties of the form of verse you have chosen, your effort is quite creditable. Some of the words are not very poetical, but the difficulty of obtaining the initial letter may have influenced their choice ! You are quite at liberty to publish the poem elsewhere.

Dolores : The first stanza of *In a Cemetery at the Front* is good, but the poem then becomes prosaic. *Vision* is mentioned above.

Victor Freville : The opening and closing lines of both your

sonnets are excellent, but the lines between do not for the most part live up to them, being too prosaic and sometimes artificial. The true feeling of your poems can, however, be felt.

Fairy Glen : The principal verb is lacking in the first two stanzas of *To Derbyshire* and the verses are little more than a catalogue. "Moors" and "roars," "ore" and "moor" do not rhyme. The idea of *My Elfin Child* is pretty, but the wording is commonplace. Why have you suddenly changed the arrangement of the rhymes in the sixth stanza ?

Tyro : There is true spiritual appreciation of Nature to be found in *The Temple*. *Music* is not quite so good, but the language of both poems is pleasing and your thoughts are poetical.

Melrose : *Gardens of Babylon* is well expressed and flowing, but it does not reach any very lofty height. However, it holds promise of better things.

Alma Delvina : The meaning of *On Angel Wings* is not clear. What is "this screen" in the second stanza ? The last two lines of the poem do not make sense grammatically. In *Ode to Sunshiners* it would be better to say "They peeped right into mankind's heart," but the personification is not pleasing and there is a superabundance of capital letters. Read Rule 2.

Seeker : There is a somewhat prosaic element in both the poems which you have submitted. *Prairie Song* is the better, but it is rather too much of a catalogue. The refrain is inspiring. The arrangement of the rhymes in *The Nameless Trail* has a halting effect ; "sun" and "Edmonton," "gone" and "unknown" do not rhyme.

E. H. D. : Your initials are being used as you omitted to give a pen-name. The thought of both your poems is lofty, but the language is too commonplace. *The Silent Stars* is the better and has a certain beauty, but avoid such expressions as "self-extinguishment."

Valetta II. : Both *March Winds* and *On the Cliff's Edge* are slight and superficial. Try to express deeper thoughts and enlarge your vocabulary. The last line of *On the Cliff's Edge* neither scans nor makes sense.

Herts : *A Child's Song of Spring* is a pretty little set of verses, but of rather too sing-song a quality. *Fulness of Life* is good, but has a somewhat monotonous effect on the ear.

Lorna : Considering your age both sets of verses are quite creditable. Aim at greater originality and study the rules of metre. Your language is good.

K. : The thought of *Hope* is not quite clearly worked out. *Whence Comes Beauty?* is mentioned above. Poems which win the Premium are published in course of time.

Victor : Both your poems are an improvement on the last you submitted. *Prospects*—*February* shows a true love of Nature. The metre of the third line of the sestet in the sonnet is faulty. ‘Avoid love poems for the present and try to write about Nature and your own thoughts.

M. : The thought of *A Spring Song* is very slight, and “beloved” is repeated too often. *Love’s Mystery* is mentioned above.

Evelina : There is too much hyperbole about your treatment of *The Wind*. The “Alas!” in the last stanza seems unnecessary. *A Child’s Fancy* is quite a pretty little poem, although it reaches no lofty height.

Myrtle : There is colour and form in your picture of *Delphi*, but the treatment is too conventional. *The Island of Patmos* is better and there is spiritual feeling in the poem. “Sun” and “Pavilion,” “alone” and “shone” do not rhyme.

Observer, R.A.F. : Although *Heather* is very slight, it charms by its simple pathos. “Flown” does not rhyme with “gone,” and the last line is weak. *Beyond the West* is mentioned above.

Lisle : Both the poems show that the writer has a musical ear. *The Poppy Fairies* is quaintly fanciful and the ending is charming. *My Birds* is not so original. The verses hold promise.

Tertius : Neither of the poems you have submitted is up to your usual standard. The meaning of *Lament* is not very clear. The picture of *Shilly River* is well painted, but the last stanza is weak and “temperamental tune” is not pleasing.

Merope : *La Tricoteuse* is still somewhat involved although the metre is correct. *Nuit Blanche*, together with some of your former poems, suggests that you are at your best in dreamy, fanciful subjects.

L. M. S. : There is distinct merit in both extracts. You have been successful in creating a decidedly weird atmosphere and the alliteration is effective. Beware of becoming bombastic.

RULES OF ENTRY FOR THE PREMIUM AWARD AND CRITICISM

1. Poems submitted may be in any metre, but must not exceed 40 lines.
2. Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.
3. Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached thereto.

4. Non-subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW must enclose the imprint (beginning "Printed by") from the last page of the cover of the current number.

5. If criticism is desired, a pen-name must be taken and 2s. 6d. enclosed.

6. Entries must be either type-written or written in ink on one side of the paper only.

We cannot undertake to return entries in any case. Poems should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," and should reach this office *not later than* May 31st.

A MYSTERY

LAST night I dreamed I held thee in my arms ;
 I kissed thy hair,—thy face ;
 And, with the day, the fragrance lingers on
 Of that sweet dream embrace.

O can it be that dreams are only shapes
 Of half-formed thoughts, that flit
 Across the darkened chamber of the mind,
 Just ere the lamp of consciousness is lit ?

Can any child of my imagining
 Such magic music play
 Shall haunt me, with its ling'ring melody,
 Through all a gladdened day ?

Or did my yearning soul—when sleep had closed
 The eyelids of my mind—
 Steal forth unseen, and somewhere in the night
 Thy spirit, waiting, find ?

D. S. BRYAN.

Surg. Lieut., R.N.
 Grand Fleet.

THE POETRY OF CHILDREN

IF poetry were (as it is evident many would-be poets assume it is) a mere statement of facts in rhyme, with no particular object or idealism accruing thereto, then no doubt the art of poetry-writing might be placed in the category of extra subjects to be learned in school classes ; whereas poetry, in its infancy, need not necessarily take any form of words at all.

It is, we believe, the attitude of mind, combined with the imagination and sense of beauty, which eventually finds expression in definite thought. Because a person is poetical in his or her conception of life or nature, it does not necessarily follow that he will become a poet in the accepted sense of the word. But if this is a true definition of poetry, then the aim of true poets should be to conceive of the beautiful in this world or the mystic of spiritual spheres and to reveal through the medium of poetry hidden depths or heights which to the prosaic mind are not apparent.

Thus certain elements appear to be essential to the birth of a poet. There must be imagination, combined with a real perception of the beautiful, and an ear not unattuned to music, the sister art to poetry. We maintain that these conditions cannot be assigned by the best of teachers to the ablest and most receptive of pupils, for the simple reason that true poetry comes from within, and is born of the spirit.

But a very great deal can be attained by means of environment, a fact which is largely overlooked or ignored in the very quarter which might surely be regarded as the source most rich in poetical material.

Children are of the very essence of poetry : their bodies, souls and spirits literally pouring forth natural beauty, love and music. Their imaginations carry them into worlds far beyond the ken of most of us older mortals ; into countries peopled with fairy folk, invisible play-fellows ; and joy, laughter and happiness ever follow where their spirits lead.

How often do they see fairy-land where we, with our mundane minds, behold but a wood of common trees ? or their wonderful imagination casts a spell over our cane-seated furniture, converting it, hey presto ! into Cinderella's coach of glittering gold and glass ? We deliberately and wittingly close the gates on this wealth of imagination ; and instead of surrounding these little visionaries

with all the beauty in life and nature that their minds naturally seek and turn to, we wilfully flood the market with toys so grotesque, unnatural, and unlovely in form and expression that we older ones are often at our wits' end to know which precise member of Noah's Ark they are intended to represent. Books illustrated in the same manner, often infinitely more suitable to the mind grown old in the ways of an inartistic world, litter the Christmas bazaars; and stories of witches and ogres, of giants and devils, take the place which should surely be accorded to fairies and beautiful nymphs. So are our children only too often brought up to look for the grotesque and unlovely from their earliest years, and it is small wonder that the spirit of true poetry is thus alienated at an early age from its natural home in the mind of the child.

Such a state of things, once recognised as being entirely opposed to the spirit of idealism, of vision, and appreciation of the beautiful and mystic in life, can surely be counteracted by every parent who cares for the cultivation and development of true Art in our land. Nature, with all her manifold mysteries and unceasing wonders, is within the reach of all; the sky and the clouds thereon are free to all students of the universe; and the world of fairies may well be studied by us older ones not only in the interests of our children, but because those who know them, and have never closed their doors to them, alone realise their debt to the fairy-land.

Let the ugly side of life and nature be rigorously banned from our nurseries, conversation and books; so will the spirit of the child through the natural gifts of imagination, love and music, be raised to the heights from which true poetry bursts into song.

MARY F. ROLT.

SOME INTERESTING EXAMPLES

A sheaf of poems comes from Phyllis G. McTerney (aged 13) deserving commendatory remark, though the verses here and there betray a sentimentality of outlook which the young writer would do well to nip in the bud. She is ambitious, which means that her ideas are slightly in advance of her power of expression, a fault curable with practice. She needs, too, the training of the ear in order to catch more music from nature. She seems to draw most of her inspiration through the outward eye. Let her learn to listen as well as to observe, and her lines will of themselves grow more musical. *Au Revoir* shows loftiness and nobility of spirit; *Tout*

Passe is a theme which is rather conventional and is not the outcome of either practical or imaginative experience ; *England* is a patriotic piece written with good effect ; *The Valley* is a charming expression of changing moods ; *To a Butterfly* is light and graceful as its subject ; *Blind* shows the writer's power of wielding pathos ; *Dusk* is a little dull ; *The Ship of Dreams* merely pretty ; *The Singing Pine* is cleverly called " the harp of the rain " ; *Sunrise and Sunset* ends on a sad note which suggests the sentimental ; *City Dawn* is banal and *Pan Pipes* conventional both in treatment and idea. Still, on the whole, the writer may take encouragement to herself and go forward.

" E. F. B." sends two religious poems of considerable force and merit. *The Little Fairies*, by Hugh John Evans, is a fantastic notion of the seaside, with a metre tripping now and then into irregularity. R. S. Baker's poem, *Pro Patria*, is of hymn-like structure. John Leslie Bowers (aged 15) sends *Prayer*, which touches a devout note, but which is technically deficient in quality. Some poems by Mildred Brown (aged 11) have already seen the light in a Yorkshire paper and show an imaginative and playful spirit. " Charmian Maine " sends a posy of picturesque verse full of light and colour. Vivienne Dayrell Browning (aged 11) sends some good lines on *Stratford* ; and Katherine Gower (aged 12) honours the death of our heroic men in a twenty-line poem entitled *Requiescant in Pace*, a subject also taken by Mollie Panter Downes (aged 12), whose *Grave in Flanders* is eloquent, and whose lines *For Those Who Weep* run as follows :—

" Nay, weep not, rather smile that he is gone
And sleeps 'neath foreign sod—
For while the world of greed and grief goes on,
He rests with God ! "

E. H. T.

MORNING

GREET the new morning, glist'ning dewdrops bright,
Greet the new morning, flowers fresh and gay,
Greet the new morning, newly-risen sun
Greet the young day.

Soar, lark, soar to the height of heaven's blue dome
Sing to the sun, as he mounts with dignity
To his throne above, so high, so bright,
In the blue sky.

THE POETRY REVIEW

Children of Earth, pay homage to the sun,
 Garland yourselves with flowers fresh and gay,
 For all is feeling happy, joyous, free,
 On this fair day.

DIANA CARROLL (11).

THE DAFFODIL

THE Daffodil is a darling flower
 It blooms in Springtime every year
 It loves the sun and every shower
 It's such a dear.

Its stalk is thick and of pale green,
 The back part can be hardly seen,
 For the front part's very bright,
 But the back part's pale, pale, white.

Of leaves there's plenty
 And at the top it thins,
 It might have been the breadth
 Of three small pins.

Some are pretty, some are bad,
 But there are plenty to be had
 And in the garden when it grows
 No one in the wide world knows
 How I love it.

IDA JOCELYN DOWDING (7).



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